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POKER TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS ASSN.
2026 Rules Version 1.0. Sept 6, 2026
Longform Version Includes:
Recommended Procedures and Illustration Addendum

The Poker TDA is a voluntary poker industry association founded in 2001. The TDA mission is to increase global uniformity of poker tournament rules. TDA Rules supplement the conventional rules of this house. In case of conflict with a gaming agency, the agency rules apply.

General Concepts

1: Floor Decisions
The best interest of the game and fairness are top priorities in decision-making. Unusual circumstances occasionally dictate that common-sense decisions in the interest of fairness take priority over technical rules. Floor decisions are final.

2: Player Responsibilities
Players should verify registration data and seat assignments, verify they're dealt the correct number of cards before SA occurs, protect their hands, make their intentions clear, follow the action, act in turn with proper terminology and gestures, defend their right to act, keep cards visible and chips correctly stacked, remain at the table with a live hand, table all cards properly when competing at showdown, speak up if they see a mistake, play in a timely manner, call for a clock when warranted, transfer tables promptly, follow one player to a hand, know and comply with the rules, practice proper etiquette, inform the house if they see or experience discriminatory or offensive behavior, and generally contribute to an orderly event where all players feel welcome.

3: Official Terminology and Gestures
A: Official betting terms are simple, unmistakable, time-honored declarations like bet, raise, call, fold, check, all-in, complete, and pot (pot-limit only). Regional terms may also meet this test. Also, players must use gestures with caution when facing action; tapping the table is a check.

B: Players facing action must use official betting terms only when declaring their own action. Using official betting terms in a question or casual conversation may be ruled binding if reasonably interpreted as the player's intended action. To avoid ambiguity players should phrase questions with neutral language. Ex: "did he raise" may be construed as declaration of raise, better to ask "what was his action").

C: It is the responsibility of players to make their intentions clear: using non-standard terms or gestures is at player's risk and may result in a ruling other than what the player intended. See also Rules 2 and 44.

4: Player Identity
Players must be clearly identifiable at all times. Tournament staff may request a player to remove any item (sunglasses, hood, or other facial covering) which inhibits their identification or is a distraction to other participants.

5: Electronic Devices and Communication
A: Players may not talk on a phone at the table. Ring tones, music, images, video etc. should be inaudible and non-disturbing to others. Allowable electronic devices, photography, videography, communication and other technology must not create a nuisance, delay the game, compromise game integrity or create competitive advantage and are subject to house and gaming regulations. Wearable devices (e.g. smart glasses, hidden cameras) and other technology capable of covert recording, communication or external assistance (including AI agents) are prohibited at the table unless specifically authorized by the TD.

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B. Phones and other devices may not rest on the table.

B: Players with live hands may not interact with or operate an electronic or communication device. The definition of such devices may include new technologies and shall be as updated by the TD.

C: Betting apps, charts, and other poker strategy tools may not be used at the table. Nor may players receive or use poker strategy data from another person or source. Violations of Rule 5 may be subject to penalties in Rule 74.

6: Official Language
The house will clearly post and announce acceptable language(s) at the table. During play, English is the only acceptable language at the table unless an exception is granted by the TD.

Seating, Breaking and Balancing Tables

7: In the Tournament with Chips
Players are considered in the tournament when in possession of chips. Players with chips who are not yet seated must proceed immediately to their assigned tables. This includes new buy-ins, alternates, and when breaking tables. See also Rule 35 Dodging Blinds.

8: Random Correct Seating
Tournament and satellite seats will be randomly assigned. A player starting in a wrong seat with a correct chip stack will move to the correct seat with their current total chip stack.

9: Alternates, Late Registration, and Re-Entries
A: Alternates, players registering late, and re-entries will be sold full stacks. They will randomly draw a seat and table by the same process and from the same seat pool then in place for new players and are dealt in except between the small blind and button (see also Rule 36-B, button placement for maximum players).

B: In re-entry events, if a player is permitted to forfeit chips and buy a new stack if they reach the re-buy deadline with 25% or less of the original base buy-in stack. In these cases, the forfeited chips will be removed from play.

10: Special Needs
Accommodations for players with special needs will be made when possible.

11: New Players and Players from Broken Tables
A: New players entering the tournament and players from broken tables can get any seat including the small or big blind or the button and be dealt in except between the SB and button. Only new players, or players who have just been big blind, may be seated and play as the small blind. If a new player is seated at small blind, they must wait for the button to pass before playing(this player will be dead SB, then dead button, then cut-off).

B: Players from a broken table will be assigned new tables and seats by a 2-step random process. See Illustration Addendum. When breaking a table, the player about to be big blind should be assigned a seat first, and get the seat due to be big blind soonest. The player about to be the button should be assigned the button seat, or seat closest behind the button. All others should get seats as close as possible to the position they would have had. The progression of the blinds should not be disrupted at a table taking on players. This is at the discretion of the ternament director, whose decision is final.

12: Balancing Tables and Halting Play
A**:** To balance in flop and mixed-games, the player to be big blind next moves to the worst position, including single big blind if available, even if that means the seat is big blind twice. Worst position is never the small blind. In stud-only, players move by position (last seat open at the short table is the seat filled).

B: In mixed games (ex: HORSE), when the game shifts from hold'em to stud, after the last hold'em hand the button moves to the position it would be if the next hand was hold'em and is frozen there during stud. The

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player moved in stud is the player who would be big blind if the game were hold'em for that hand. Shifting to hold'em the button starts where it was frozen.

C**:** Table break procedures should not be posted. Breaking tables randomly is an acceptable but not mandatory procedure.

C: Play will halt on tables 3 or more players short (by elimination) than the table with the most players once the blinds are impacted (See Illustration Addendum). Play halts on other formats (ex: 6-hand and turbos) at TDs discretion. TDs may waive halting play and waiver is not a misdeal. As the event progresses, at TD's discretion tables should be more tightly balanced.

Pots / Showdown

13: Declarations, Cards Speak at Showdown

Cards speak to determine the winner. Verbal statements of hand value or declarations of action ("fold", "you win", "take it") are not binding at showdown but deliberately miscalling a hand may be penalized. Dealers should read and announce hand values at showdown. Any person, in the hand or not, should speak up if they think a mistake is made in reading hands or calculating and awarding the pot.

14: Tabling Cards and Killing Winning Hand

A: Proper tabling is both 1) turning all cards face up on the table and 2) allowing the dealer and players to read the hand clearly. "All cards" means both hole cards in hold'em, all 4 hole cards in Omaha, all 7 cards in 7-stud, etc.

B: At showdown players must protect their hands while waiting for cards to be read (See also Rule 67). Players who don't fully table all cards, then muck thinking they've won, do so at their own risk. If a hand is not 100% retrievable and identifiable and the TD rules it was not clearly read, the player has no claim to the pot. The TDs decision on whether a hand was sufficiently tabled is final.

C: Dealers cannot kill a properly tabled hand that was obviously the winner.

15: Live Cards at Showdown

Discarding non-tabled cards face down does not automatically kill them; players may change their minds and table cards that remain 100% identifiable and retrievable. Cards are killed by the dealer when pushed into the muck or otherwise rendered irretrievable and unidentifiable.

16: Showdown and Discarding Irregularities

A: If a player tables one card that would make a winning hand, the dealer should advise the player to table all cards. If the player refuses, the floor should be called. Both cards must be properly tabled to win the hand at showdown. If any card is mucked, the entire hand is disqualified.

B: If a player bets then discards thinking they have won (forgetting another player is still in the hand), the dealer should hold the cards and call the floor (a Rule 60 exception). If cards are mucked and not retrievable and identifiable to 100% certainty, the player is out and not entitled to a refund of called bets. If cards are mucked and the player initiated a bet or raise not yet called, the uncalled amount will be returned.

C: At showdown, losing hands that were tabled should be turned face down and remain identifiable (without being mixed in the muck) until the winner is determined and the pot is awarded.

17: Face Up for All-Ins

All hands will be tabled without delay once a player is all-in and all betting action by all other players in the hand is complete. No player who is either all-in or has called all betting action may muck their hand without tabling. All hands in both the main and side pot(s) must be tabled and are live. See Illustration Addendum.

18: Non All-In Showdowns and Showdown Order

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A: In a non all-in showdown, if cards are not spontaneously tabled or discarded, the TD may enforce an order of show. The last aggressive player on the final betting round (final street) must table first. If there was no final round bet, the player who would act first in a final betting round must table first (i.e. first seat left of the button in flop games, high hand showing in stud, low hand in razz, etc.).

B: A non all-in showdown is uncontested if all but one player mucks face down without tabling. The last player with live cards wins and is not required to table the cards.

19: Asking to See a Hand

A: Players not still in possession of cards at showdown, or who have mucked their cards face down without tabling, lose any rights or privileges to ask to see any hand.

B: If there was a river bet, any caller has an inalienable right to have the last aggressor's hand tabled on request ("the hand they paid to see") provided the caller tabled or retains his or her cards. TDs discretion governs all other requests such as to see the hand of another caller, or if there was no river bet. See Illustration Addendum [adopted 2013].

20: Playing the Board at Showdown

To play the board, players must table all hole cards to get part of the pot (See Rule 14-A).

21: Awarding Odd Chips

First, odd chips will be broken into the smallest denomination in play. A) Board games with 2 or more high or low hands: the odd chip goes to the first seat left of the button. B) Stud, razz, and if 2 or more high or low hands in stud/8: the odd chip goes to the high card by suit in the player's 5-card winning hand. C) H/L split: the odd chip in the total pot goes to the high side. D) In non-standard non high-low games the odd chip goes to the worst position.

22: BBA: Order of Finish and Bounty Prizes

In games played with big blind ante, if ITM and two or more players bust, the player with the larger starting stack after the ante is put in will finish higher. Likewise if a bounty is in play the player with the larger stack after the ante will receive the higher prize.

23: Side Pots

Each side pot will be split separately.

24: Disputed Hands and Pots

The reading of a tabled hand may be disputed until the next hand begins (see Rule 25). Accounting errors in calculating and awarding the pot may be disputed until substantial action occurs on the next hand. If a hand finishes during a break, the right to any dispute ends 1 minute after the pot is awarded.

General Procedures

25: New Hand / New Betting Limits

A: A new level begins officially upon floor announcement or audio signal by the tournament clocking system. The new betting limits apply to the next hand.

B: Hands begin on the first riffle cut, push of the shuffler button, or the dealer push. If a hand mistakenly begins at the previous level, the hand will continue at that level once substantial action occurs (Rule 38). If a new level begins during the dealer push, the incoming dealer will deal one hand at the previous level.

C: If the dealer fails to recognize an official level change, any person may call attention to it and the dealer must immediately apply the correct betting limits.

25.5: Playing With Two Decks

When two decks are made available at the table the decks will be of contrasting colours. While the current dealer uses Deck A to deal the active hand, the previous dealer or designated person gathers, shuffles, and

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places Deck B ready for the next deal. Once the current hand concludes and it is time for the next deal, the freshly shuffled deck is brought into play, the dealer cuts the deck and commences dealing.

26: Chip Race, Scheduled Color Ups

A: At scheduled color-ups, chips will be raced off starting in seat 1, with a maximum of one chip awarded to a player. Players can't be raced out of play: a player losing their last chip(s) in a race will get 1 chip of the lowest denomination still in play.

B: Players must have their chips fully visible and are encouraged to witness the chip race.

C: If after the race, a player still has chips of a removed denomination, they will be exchanged for current denominations only at equal value. Chips of removed denominations that do not fully total at least the smallest denomination still in play will be removed without compensation.

D: A single active player may be designated to buy chips from the other players when there is no action at the table.

E: When the TD or tournament clock announce a chip race, it shall be done at the conclusion of the current hand at each table. One minute will be added to the current round.

27: Cards and Chips Kept Visible, Countable, and Manageable. Discretionary Color-Ups

A: Players, dealers, and the floor are entitled to a reasonable estimation of chip counts; thus, chips must be kept in clean vertical stacks of 20 same-denomination chips. Higher denomination chips must be visible and identifiable at all times. If a floor person can't look at a chip stack and quickly estimate its value, players likely can't either.

B: TDs control the number and denominations of chips in play and may color up one or more players at their discretion at any time. Discretionary color ups are to be announced.

C: Players must keep live hands in plain view at all times.

28: Deck Changes

Deck changes and replacement of damaged cards will be on the dealer push or level changes or as prescribed by the house at the TD's discretion. Players may not ask for deck changes.

29: Re-buys

Players may not miss a hand. Players declaring intent to rebuy before a hand are playing chips behind and must make the re-buy.

30: Rabbit Hunting

Rabbit hunting (revealing cards that would have come if the hand had not ended) is not allowed.

31: Calling for a Clock

A: Players should act in a timely manner to maintain a reasonable pace of the game. If in TD's judgement reasonable time has passed, they may call the clock or approve a clock request by any player in the event. Players must be at their seats to call for a clock (Rule 32). A player on the clock has up to 25 seconds plus a 5 second countdown to act. If the player faces a bet and time expires, the hand is dead; if not facing a bet, the hand is checked. A tie goes to the player. TDs may adjust the time allowed and take other steps to fit the game and stop persistent delays. See also Rules 2, 73, and 74.

B. When it is a player's turn to act, attention must be given to the game over any other action. Failing this, a 5 second immediate countdown may be requested by any person at the table, involved in the game, whether in the hand or not. Acceptance is at the dealer's discretion. If the dealer decision is protested, discretion reverts to the TD.

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Player Present / Eligible for Hand

32: At Your Seat and Live Hands

To have a live hand, players must be at their seats when the last card is dealt to all players on the initial deal. Players not then at their seats may not look at their cards which are killed immediately. Their posted blinds and antes forfeit to the pot and an absent player dealt the stud bring-in card posts the bring-in. “At your seat” means in reach of your chair. This rule is not intended to encourage players to be out of their seats while in a hand.

33: At the Table with Action Pending

Players with live hands (including players all-in or otherwise finished betting) must remain at the table for all betting rounds and showdown. Leaving the table is incompatible with protecting your hand and following the action and is subject to penalty. Penalty will be at the TD’s discretion and may include disqualification of the hand.

Button / Blinds

34: Dead Button

Tournament play will use a dead button.

35: Dodging Blinds

Players who intentionally dodge any blind will incur a penalty. See Rule 74-B.

36: Button Placement and Movement

A: If incorrect button movement is discovered before SA occurs, the error will be corrected. However, if SA has occurred, play will continue. Ex: If the button is moved twice and SA occurs the error will stand, the button will not be backed-up on the next hand. All players have a responsibility to monitor button placement and speak up if they see a mistake (Rule 2).

B: The button does not belong to a seat. If player elimination would result in a dead button and multiple vacant seats are open for incoming players, the button will advance one or more vacant seats to preserve the normal blind progression and seat the maximum number of incoming players, provided no player misses or posts consecutive big blinds. Ex scenario: seat 9 is the button, seat 1 the SB, seats 2 and 3 are vacant and seat 4 is BB. On this hand seat 1 (SB) busts. On the next hand the button will advance to seat 3 so the hand is dealt with SB on seat 4 and BB on seat 5. This placement allows new players to take seats 1 and 2 without being positioned between the button and the blinds.

C: Heads-up, the small blind is the button, is dealt the last card, and acts first pre-flop and last on all other betting rounds. Starting heads-up play, the button may need to be adjusted to ensure no player has the big blind twice in a row.

Dealing Rules

37: Misdeals and Fouled Decks

A: Misdeals include but are not necessarily limited to: 1) 2 or more boxed cards, or cards exposed by dealer error, on the initial deal(including the card that would have been the first burn); 2) first card dealt to the wrong seat; 3) cards dealt to a seat not entitled to a hand; 4) a seat entitled to a hand is dealt out; 5) the wrong number of cards is dealt to any player (except Rule 39); 6) In flop games, if 1 of the first 2 cards dealt off the deck or any other 2 down cards are boxed or exposed by dealer error. House rules apply for draw games (ex: lowball). If there is only one boxed or exposed card, and it is not a misdeal, that card becomes the first burn, and the player that would have been dealt it will be dealt the last card. If the only boxed card is the first burn, it will still be the burn. After the deal, if the second or/and third burn card is/are exposed, it/they will remain the burn/s. Any boxed street cards that have been properly hidden by the burns will stand.

B: Players may be dealt 2 consecutive cards on the button (see also Rule 39).

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C: In misdeals, the re-deal is an exact re-play: the button doesn't move, no new players are seated, limits stay the same. Cards are dealt to players who were dealt-in but not at their seats for the original deal and they can play the re-deal (Rule 32). Players on penalty who were originally dealt-in will receive cards then their hands are killed. The original deal and re-deal count as 1 hand for a player on penalty, not 2.

D: Once substantial action occurs (see Rule 38) a misdeal cannot be declared; the hand must proceed unless the deck is fouled.

E: Fouled decks. The deck is fouled if it contains 2 or more cards of the same suit and rank, or a non-standard card for the game type (ex: jokers in any standard game, 2-3-4-5 in short deck), or if it contains a card with a different colour or pattern on the back. Other fouled deck conditions may be defined by local gaming regulations and house policy. If a fouled deck is discovered, regardless of SA, play will stop and all bets will be returned. Once a hand concludes, the right to dispute based on a fouled deck ends according to Rule 24.

38: Substantial Action (SA)
Substantial Action is either A) any 2 actions in turn, at least one of which puts chips in the pot (i.e. any 2 actions except 2 checks or 2 folds) or B) any combination of 3 actions in turn (check, bet, raise, call, fold). Posted blinds do not count towards SA. See Rules 37-D and 55-B. Note: this is often called "Significant Action", the terms have identical meaning.

39: Button with Too Few Cards
A player on the button dealt too few cards should announce it immediately. Missing button cards may be replaced even after substantial action if permitted for the game type. However, if the button acts on a hand with too few cards (by check or bet), the button's hand is dead.

40: Burns After Substantial Action
The burn card is to protect the stub, not "preserve card order". If SA occurs and a hand is killed due to the wrong number of cards, all cards of the killed hand are mucked and randomness applies to further dealing (See also RP-14 Randomness). The stub is treated as a normal stub and one and only one card is burned off the stub for each subsequent street. The burn is always one card per street, never more. See Illustration Addendum.

41: Irregular Flops, missed burns, and Premature-Dealt Cards
A: 4-Card Flops. If the flop has 4 rather than 3 cards, exposed or not, and regardless of whether the door card is presumed known, the floor will be called. The dealer then mixes the 4 cards face down, the floor randomly selects 1 as the next burn card and the other 3 are the flop (See also RP-14 Randomness).

B: If there was no burn on a 3-card flop, exposed or not and regardless of whether the door card is presumed known, if no action has occurred, the 3 cards are scrambled face down, one chosen as the burn. The flop will be the other 2 cards plus the next card off the stub. If any action (even one check) has occurred, play proceeds with the initial 3 cards. Only one card is burned for the turn.

C. If there was no burn on the turn or river, the dealer will shuffle the street card back in. If any action (even one check) has occurred, play proceeds with the initial street card. If this happens on the turn, only one card is burned for the river.

D: For prematurely dealt cards, see Recommended Procedure 5.

E: Reshuffling During a Hand. To protect game integrity, anytime the stub must be re-shuffled during the play of a hand, the cards must be shuffled face-down and unexposed. Examples include premature cards (Rule 41 and RP-5), disordered stub (RP-4), extra draw or stud cards (RP-10-H), etc.

Play: Bets and Raises

42: Methods of Betting: Verbal and Chips

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A: Bets are by verbal declaration and/or pushing out chips. If a player does both, whichever is first defines the bet. If simultaneous, a clear and reasonable verbal declaration takes precedence, otherwise the chips play. In unclear situations or where verbal and chips are contradictory, the TD will determine the bet based on the circumstances and Rule 1. See Illustration Addendum. See also Rule 59.

B: Verbal declarations may be general ("call", "raise"), a specific amount only ("one thousand") or both ("raise, one thousand").

C: For all betting rules, declaring a specific amount only is the same as silently pushing out an equal amount. Ex: Declaring "two hundred" is the same as silently pushing out 200 in chips.

43: Methods of Calling

Standard and acceptable forms of calling include: A) saying "call"; B) pushing out chips equal to a call; C) silently pushing out an overchip; or D) silently pushing out multiple chips equal to a call under the multi-chip rule (Rule 47). Silently betting chip(s) relatively tiny to the bet (ex: blinds 2k-4k. A bets 50k, B then silently puts out one 1k chip) is non-standard, strongly discouraged, subject to penalty, and will be interpreted at TDs discretion, including being ruled a full call. It will not be ruled as an all-in bet if that amount exceeds the previous bet. Unless agreed by all active players at the table, or determined by the TD, any underbet will not be returned to the better who may be given the choice of a full call or fold and lose the underbet.

44: Methods of Raising

In no-limit or pot-limit, a raise must be made by A) pushing out the full amount in one motion or B) verbally declaring the full amount prior to pushing out chips. It is the responsibility of players to make their intentions clear. Note: 2-motion raises eliminated in 2019.

45: Raise Amounts

A: A raise must be at least equal to the largest prior full bet or raise of the current betting round. A player who raises 50% or more of the largest prior bet but less than a minimum raise must make a full minimum raise. If less than 50% it is a call unless "raise" is first declared or the player is all-in (Rule 47-B). Declaring an amount or pushing out the same amount of chips is treated the same (Rule 42-C). Ex: NLHE, opening bet is 1000, verbally declaring "Fourteen hundred" or silently pushing out 1400 in chips are both calls unless raise is first declared. See Illustration Addendum.

B: Without other clarifying information, declaring raise and an amount is the total bet. Ex: A opens for 2000, B declares "Raise, eight thousand." The total bet is 8000.

46: Oversized Chip Betting (Overchips)

If facing a bet or blind, pushing out a single oversized chip (including your last chip) is a call if raise isn't first declared. To raise with an overchip you must declare raise before the chip hits the table surface. If raise is declared but no amount is stated, the raise is the maximum allowable for the chip. If not facing a bet, pushing out an overchip silently (no declaration) is a bet of the maximum for the chip.

47: Multiple Chip Betting

A: If facing a bet, unless raise or all-in is declared first, a multiple-chip bet (including a bet of your last chips) is a call if every chip is needed to make the call; i.e. removal of just one of the smallest chips leaves less than the call amount. Ex-1: Player A opens for 400: B raises to 1100 total (a 700 raise), C puts out one 500 and one 1000 chip silently. This is a call because removing the 500 chip leaves less than the 1100 call amount. Ex-2: NLHE 25-50. Post-flop A opens for 1050 and B puts out his last chips (two 1000's). B calls unless raise or all-in was first declared.

B: If every chip is not needed to make the call; i.e. removing just one of the smallest chips leaves the call amount or more: 1) if the player has chips remaining, the 50% standard in Rule 45 governs the bet. 2) A bet of a player's last chip(s) is an all-in bet whether reaching the 50% threshold or not. See Addendum.

48: Prior Bet Chips Not Pulled In

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A: To avoid confusion, players with prior-bet chips not yet pulled in who face a raise should verbalize their action before adding chips to the prior bet.

B: If facing a raise, clearly pulling back a prior bet chip binds a player to call or raise; they may not put the chip(s) back out and fold.

C: If new chip(s) are added silently and the bet is unclear to the house, the call and raise rules 43-47 apply as follows: 1) If prior chips don't cover the call AND are either left alone OR fully pulled back, an overchip is a call and multiple new chips are subject to the 50% raise standard (Rule 45). 2) If prior chips are partly pulled back OR if prior chip(s) cover the call, the combined final chip bet is a raise if reaching the 50% standard (Rules 45 and 47), if less it's a call. See Illustration Addendum.

49: Re-Opening the Bet.

A: In no-limit and pot limit, an all-in wager (or cumulative multiple short all-ins) totaling less than a full bet or raise will not reopen betting for players who have already acted and are not facing at least a full bet or raise when the action returns to them. If multiple short all-ins re-open the betting, the minimum raise is always the last full valid bet or raise of the round (See also Rule 45).

B: In limit, at least 50% of a full bet or raise is required to re-open betting for players who have already acted. See Illustration Addendum.

50: Number of Allowable Raises

There is no cap on the number of raises in no-limit and pot-limit. In limit play, there is a limit to raises even when heads-up until the event is down to 2 players; the house limit applies.

51: Accepted Action

Poker is a game of alert, continuous observation. It is the caller's responsibility to determine the correct amount of an opponent's bet before calling, regardless of what is stated by others. If a caller requests a count but receives incorrect information from a dealer or player, then pushes out that amount or declares call, the caller has accepted the full correct action and is subject to the correct wager or all-in amount. As with all situations, Rule 1 may apply at TD's discretion. See also RP-12.

52: Acting in Turn

A: Players must act in turn verbally and/or by pushing out chips. Action in turn is binding and commits chips to the pot that stay in the pot.

B: Players must wait for clear bet amounts before acting. Ex: NLHE, A says "raise" (but no amount), and B quickly folds. B should wait to act until A's raise amount is clear.

53: Binding Declarations / Undercalls in Turn

A: General verbal declarations in turn (such as "call" or "raise") commit a player to the full current action. See Illustration Addendum

B: A player undercalls by declaring or pushing out less than the call amount without first declaring "call". An undercall is a mandatory full call if made in turn facing 1) any bet heads-up or 2) the opening bet on any round multi-way. In other situations, TD's discretion applies. The opening bet is the first chip bet of each betting round (not a check). In blind games the posted BB is the pre-flop opener. All-in buttons reduce undercall frequency (See Recommended Procedure 1). This rule governs when players must make a full call and when, at TDs discretion they may forfeit the amount of the intended undercall and fold (see Illustration Addendum). For underbets and underraises, see Rule 54.

C: If two or more undercalls occur in sequence, play backs up to the first undercaller who must correct his or her bet per Rule 53-B. The TD will determine how to treat hands of the remaining bettors based on the circumstances.

54: Incorrect Bets, Underbets and Underraises

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A: In limit and no-limit, opening or raising less than the minimum legal amount is corrected anywhere on the current street (if on the river any time before showdown starts). Ex: NLHE 100-200, post-flop A opens for 600 and B raises to 1000 (a 200 underraise). C and D call, E folds then the error is noticed. Increase the bet to 1200 total for all bettors any time before the turn is dealt. After the turn the error stands. For undercalls, see Rule 53.

B: In pot limit, if a player underbets the pot based on an inaccurate count, if the pot count is too high (an illegal bet), it will be corrected for all players anywhere on the current street; if too low, corrected until substantial action occurs after the bet. See Illustration Addendum.

55: Action Out of Turn (OOT)

A: In multi-way play (3 or more players this hand):
1: any action out of turn (check, call, or raise) will be backed up to the correct player in order. The OOT action is subject to penalty and is binding if action to the OOT player does not change. A check, call or fold by the correct player does not change action. If action changes, the OOT action is not binding; any bet or raise is returned to the OOT player who has all options: call, raise, or fold. An OOT fold is binding. See Illustration Addendum.

2: Players skipped by OOT action must defend their right to act. If a skipped player had reasonable time and does not speak up before substantial action (Rule 38) OOT occurs after the player, the OOT action is binding. Action backs up and the floor will rule on how to treat the skipped hand given the circumstances, including limiting the player to non-aggressive action or even ruling the hand dead. See Addendum.

B: In heads-up play (2 players only remaining in this hand “Players A and B”), if player B acts passively out of turn (i.e. checks), he may only call or fold to any bet from A, he cannot raise on this betting round

56: Pot Size and Pot-Limit Bets

A: Players are entitled to a pot count in pot-limit only. Dealers will not count the pot in limit and no-limit. See also RP-21 Spreading the Pot

B: Pre-flop a dead or short all-in blind will not affect pot calculation. All pre-flop pot and re-pot bets will assume full blinds were posted. Ex 1: PLO, 100-200 blinds, dead SB, BB posts 200. Ex 2: SB posts 100, BB short posts 100. In both examples the pot-limit bet for first player to act is 700.

C: Post-flop, bets are based on actual pot size.

D: Declaring “I bet the pot” is not a valid bet in no-limit but it does bind the player to making a valid bet (at least a minimum bet) and may be subject to penalty. Players facing a bet must make a valid raise.

57: Invalid Bet Declarations

If a player faces no bet and: A) declares “call”, it is a check; B) declares “raise”, the player must make at least a minimum bet. A player declaring “check” when facing a bet may call or fold, but cannot raise.

58: String Bets and Raises

String bets and raises are not allowed. Such wagers involve multiple movements whereby a player puts out a bet then returns to their stack for more chips to add to the bet.

59: Non-Standard and Unclear Betting

Players use unofficial betting terms and gestures at their own risk. These may be interpreted to mean other than what the player intended. Also, if a declared bet can legally have multiple meanings, it will be ruled the highest reasonable amount that is less than or equal to the pot size* before the bet. Ex: NLHE 200-400, the pot totals less than 5000, player declares “I bet five.” With no other clarifying information, the bet is 500; if the pot totals 5000 or more, the bet is 5000. *The pot is the total of all prior bets including any bets in front of a player not yet pulled in. See Rules 2, 3, 42 and 44.

60: Non-Standard Folds

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Any time before the end of the final betting round, folding in turn if there's no bet to you (ex: facing a check or first to act post-flop) or folding out of turn are binding folds subject to penalty. See also 16-B.

61: Conditional and Premature Declarations
A: Conditional statements of future action are non-standard and strongly discouraged. At TDs discretion they may be binding and/or penalized. Example: "if – then" statements such as "If you bet, I will raise."

B: If Player A declares "bet" or "raise" and B calls before A's exact bet amount is known, the TD will rule the bet as best fits the situation including possibly obliging B to call any amount.

62: Count of Opponent's Chip Stack
Players, dealers, and the floor are entitled to a reasonable estimation of opponents' chip stacks (Rule 25). A player may request a more precise count only if facing an all-in bet and it is his or her turn to act. The all-in player is not required to count; on request the dealer or floor will count it. Accepted action applies (Rule 51). Visible and countable chip stacks (Rule 27) greatly improve counting accuracy.

63: Over-Betting Expecting Change
Betting should not be used to obtain change. Pushing out more than the intended bet can confuse everyone at the table. All chips pushed out silently are at risk of being counted in the bet. Ex: the opening bet is 325 to player A who silently puts out 525 (one 500 and one 25), expecting 200 change. This is a raise to 650 under the multiple chip rule (Rule 47).

64: All-In with Chips Found Behind Later
If A bets all-in and a hidden chip is found behind after a player calls, the TD will determine if the chip behind is part of accepted action (Rule 51). If not part of the action, A is not paid off for the chip(s) if he or she wins. If A loses, he or she is not saved by the chip(s) and the TD may award the chip(s) to the winning caller.

Play: Other

65: Chips Out of View and in Transit
Players may not hold or transport chips in a way that takes them out of view. A player who does so will forfeit the chips and may be disqualified. The forfeited chips will be taken out of play. The TDA recommends the house provide racks or bags to transport chips when needed.

66: Lost and Found Chips
Lost and found chips for which ownership cannot be determined will be taken out of play and returned to tournament inventory.

67: Accidentally Killed / Fouled / Exposed Hands
A: Players must protect their hands at all times, including at showdown while waiting for hands to be read. If the dealer kills a hand by mistake or if in TDs judgement a hand is fouled and cannot be identified to 100% certainty, the player has no redress and is not entitled to a refund of called bets. If the player initiated a bet or raise and hasn't been called, the uncalled amount will be returned.

B: If a hand is fouled but can be identified, it remains in play despite any cards exposed.

68: Dead Hands and Mucking in Stud
In stud poker, if a player picks up the upcards while facing action, the hand is dead. Proper mucking in stud is turning down all up cards and pushing them all forward face down.

Etiquette and Penalties

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69: No Disclosure, One Player to a Hand

Players must protect other players in the tournament at all times. Therefore players, whether in the hand or not, must not:

1. Discuss contents of live or mucked hands,
2. Advise or criticize play at any time,
3. Read a hand that hasn't been tabled.

One-player-to-a-hand is in effect. Among other things, this rule prohibits showing a hand to or discussing strategy with another player, advisor, or spectator. At any time, if a player intentionally discloses any portion of his hand to another player still in the hand, the player disclosing will be eliminated from the tournament. Whether disclosure is intentional or not, all players in the hand will be entitled to the same information. If, during a hand, a player discloses any portion of his hand to any other player not in the hand, or to any player after the hand, then all players are entitled to the same information after the hand. The disclosing player will also be subject to penalty at the TD's discretion.

70: Exposing Cards and Proper Folding

Exposing cards with action pending, including the current player when last to act, may result in a penalty but not a dead hand. Any penalty begins at the end of the hand. When folding, cards should be pushed forward low to the table, not deliberately exposed or tossed high ("helicoptered"). See Rule 68.

71: Ethical Play

Poker is an individual game. Soft play will result in penalties, which may include chip forfeiture and/or disqualification. Checking the exclusive nuts when last to act on the river is not an automatic soft play violation; TD's discretion applies based on the situation. Chip dumping and other forms of collusion will result in disqualification.

72: Player Conduct and Behavioral Integrity

Every participant is entitled to a safe, polite, and peaceful tournament environment. Unsportsmanlike conduct, harassment, and toxic behavior will not be tolerated. The Tournament Director (TD) and Floor Staff retain sole discretion to penalize any player violating these standards.
Prohibited behavioral conduct includes, but is not limited to:

• Abusive Conduct: Personal attacks, insults, threats, sexist or hate speech, or harassment of players, staff, or spectators.
• Aggressive Behavior: Taunting, intimidating, or making hostile statements to other participants.
• Card/Chip Aggression: Throwing cards off the table, at staff or players, or damaging property.
• Critical Commentary: Criticizing, mocking, or other negative comments on a player's play or strategy.
• Game Disruption: Excess chatter, shouting, or creating a nuisance that interrupts the flow of the game.
• Offensive Apparel: Wearing attire with derogatory, prejudiced, aggressive or illegal messages.
• Identity Concealment: Using masks or other objects that intentionally conceal a player's identity.
• Substance Impairment: Showing signs of intoxication or drug use that alters social behavior or compromises the event.
• Offensive Hygiene: Neglecting personal cleanliness to the detriment or discomfort of others at the table.

73: Game Pace, Physical Etiquette, and Mechanics

Players must maintain proper physical etiquette and game mechanics to ensure tournament integrity and a fair pace of play. Prohibited tactical and physical conduct includes, but is not limited to:

• Persistent Delay: Intentionally or repeatedly slowing down the pace of play (stalling).
• Out-of-Turn Actions: Intentionally or carelessly acting, folding, mucking, or leaving the table out of turn.
• Showdown Deception: Intentionally or repeatedly declaring hands to be different from the hand actually held at showdown.
• Premature Exposure: Intentionally or repeatedly exposing cards before action is complete.
• Muck Violations: Revealing cards that are already in the muck while a hand is actively being played.
• Game Manipulation: Making false statements or actions to influence another competitor's decision.
• Collusion & Soft Play: Violating "one player to a hand," advising others, instructing actions, or agreeing to soft

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play/checking down.
• Physical Proximity: Unnecessarily touching another player's person, cards, or chips.
• Chip/Bet Etiquette: Splashing chips on top of the pot or placing bets outside the reach of the dealer.
• Stack Visibility: Failing to keep cards fully visible or chips in clean, countable stacks with higher denominations up front.

74: Warnings, Penalties, and Disqualification

A: Enforcement options include but are not limited to verbal warnings, one or more "missed hand" or "missed round" penalties, chip penalties (see RP-26), and disqualification. For missed rounds, the offender will miss one hand for every player (including him or her) at the table when the penalty is given multiplied by the number of penalty rounds. Repeat infractions are subject to escalating penalties. Players away from the table or on penalty may be anted or blinded out of a tournament.

B: Penalties will be given for abusive or disruptive behavior, dodging blinds, cheating or soft play. Penalties may be invoked for other violations in Rules 72 and 73.

C: Players on penalty must be away from the table. Cards are dealt to their seats, their blinds and antes posted, their hands are killed after the initial deal, and if dealt the stud bring-in they must post the bring-in.

D: Chips of a disqualified player shall be removed from play. See also RP-23.

POKER TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS ASSN.
2026 Recommended Procedures,
Version 1.0, Draft 5 Re-numbered, August 24, 2026

TDA Recommended Procedures are policy suggestions to reduce errors and improve event management. They also may apply to situations with too many variations to address in one universal rule. The fairest ruling in these cases may require use of multiple rules, evaluation of all circumstances, and reliance on Rule 1 as a primary guide.

RP-1. All-In Betting and Plaques

When betting all-in, either all or none of the player's chips should be clearly pushed forward. Partial stacks forward with chips behind can mislead other players. All-in plaques clearly indicate a player is "all-in." The dealer (not the players) should keep the plaques. When a player bets all-in, the dealer should place an all-in plaque in front of the player, in full view of the rest of the table.

RP-2. Bringing in Bets is Discouraged

Routinely bringing in chips as betting and raising proceeds around the table is poor dealing practice. Reducing bet stacks can influence action, create confusion and increase errors. Only the player currently facing action may ask the dealer to bring-in bets.

RP-3. Personal Belongings

The table surface is vital for chip stack management, dealing, and betting. The table and nearby spaces (legroom and walkways) must not be cluttered by non-essential personal items. Each cardroom should clearly display its policy on items allowed in the tournament area.

RP-4. Disordered Stub

When cards remain to be dealt on a hand and the stub is accidentally dropped and appears to be disordered: 1) first try to reconstruct the stub in its original order if possible; 2) If not possible, create a new stub using only

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the stub cards (not the muck and prior burns). These should be scrambled, shuffled, cut, and play proceeds with the new stub; 3) If when dropped the stub is mixed in with the muck and/or burns, then scramble the mixed cards together, shuffle, and cut. Play proceeds with the new stub.

RP-5. Prematurely Dealt Cards
Board and burn cards are sometimes dealt prematurely, before action on the preceding round is finished. The general procedures for these situations are:

A: Premature flop, leave the flop burn card as the burn. Return the premature board cards to the deck stub and reshuffle the entire stub. Re-deal the flop (without another burn) from the newly shuffled stub.

B: A premature turn card: leave the turn burn card as the burn. Return the premature turn card to the stub and reshuffle the entire stub. Re-deal the turn (without another burn) from the newly shuffled stub.

C: A premature river card: leave the river burn card as the burn. Return the premature river card to the stub and reshuffle the entire stub. Re-deal the river (without another burn) from the newly shuffled stub.

D: Premature card in stud: the premature card is returned to the stub, the stub is re-shuffled and a new street is dealt from the newly shuffled stub without another burn.

RP-6. Efficient Movement of Players
Moving players for breaking and balancing should be expeditious so as not to unduly miss blinds or otherwise delay the game. If possible, players should have racks for chip transport and sufficient color-ups should be done so players do not carry unusually large numbers of chips (see Rules 11, 12 and 65).

RP-7. Timing of Dealer Pushes
The TDA recommends that dealers hold up the push 90 seconds prior to a scheduled break or a level change. This avoids having time expire in crucial stages of the game.

RP-8: Hand for Hand Procedures
A: Payoff eligibility starts at the announcement: “finish the current hand you’re on then hold up, we are going hand for hand”. If enough players bust on the current hand to break into the money, the busting players will be eligible for a share of the place(s) paid on the current hand. Example: NLHE tournament paying 50 players. 52 players remain when the announcement is made and during the current hand 3 players bust. All 3 players will share in the 50th place payout.

B: During H4H play, a maximum of 3 minutes per hand will be deducted from the clock.

C: So that players can most clearly know the timing of level changes, whenever possible the clock should be reduced by 2-minutes each hand not after “batches” of multiple hands.

D: Blinds continue to increase as time elapses off the clock at the rate of 2 minutes per hand and new levels are reached.

E: Players are encouraged but not required to remain seated during H4H play.

F: In the event of an all-in and call during H4H, the cards of all players in the hand should remain face down. Dealers should not deal additional cards until instructed.

RP-9: Number of Players at Final Table
9 and 8-handed events will combine from two tables of five players each to a 9-handed final table. 7 and 6-handed events will combine from two tables of four players each to a 7-handed final table.

RP-10: Tournament Stud Dealing Procedures
A: A downcard exposed on the initial deal will be the player’s upcard and 3rd street will be dealt down to that player. The player can be the bring-in.

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B: If any downcard on 7th street is accidentally exposed by the dealer, it will be replaced if betting action remains on the hand. The exposed card will be shuffled together with the remaining stub and the deal completed without a burn to all remaining players needing a 7th card. The player with the exposed card is not allowed to keep the card and declare all-in. 7th street should be dealt down even if no betting action remains on the hand and in all-in situations the player(s) not at risk expose first.

C: Cards of a player not at his or her seat (See Rule 32) for the deal will be killed. No cards will be dealt to a hand on 4th street that is not live.

D: If there are two or more matching high hands showing in Stud (or Stud-8) or low hands in Razz, betting starts on the hand with the high card by suit in both games.

E: If the player dealt the low card by suit is all-in for the ante, betting starts to his or her left. Players with chips must bet at least the bring-in or fold.

F: Bets will not be doubled on 4th street for a pair showing.

G: For premature cards dealt in stud see RP-5-D.

H: 7th street short stub procedure. If before dealing 7th street the number of cards in the current stub is less than the "required number" (# remaining players + burn card + undealt last card) proceed as follows: A) if the required number can be reached by adding the 3 prior burn cards (for 4th, 5th, and 6th street) the current stub will be scrambled with the prior burns to create a new stub. The new stub will be cut, a card burned, and one card dealt to each player. B) if there are at least 3 cards in the current stub but adding the prior burns would not reach the required number, the dealer will burn the top card of the current stub and deal the next card as a community card in the center of the table. C) if the current stub has less than 3 cards, it will be scrambled with the 3 prior burns for a new stub which will then be cut, a card burned, and the next card dealt as a community card. D) If a community card is in play, the first player who would act on 6th street will be first to act on 7th street.

RP-11: Ante Formats and No Ante Reduction
If a single-payer ante is used, the big blind ante format (BBA) with big-blind-first calculation is recommended. Antes should not be reduced (including at the final table) as play progresses in the event.

RP-12: Dealers Should Announce Bets and Raises
Dealers should routinely announce non-all-in bet values as betting proceeds around the table. All-in bets will be counted only on request of the player currently facing action. Accepted action continues to apply (Rule 51). Scheduled and discretionary color-ups improve bet countability.

RP-13: Dealers Should Stack Chips in Split-Pot Games
Where possible, dealers should periodically stack pot chips in split-pot games. Stacking chips should not obscure players' view or otherwise disrupt the game.

RP-14: Randomness May be Applied to Special Situations
For error remedies not otherwise covered in the TDA Rules and Procedures, TDs may use the concept of randomness to design a solution.

RP-15: Proper Tournament Staff Communication
A: Outgoing dealers should inform incoming dealers of pertinent information regarding the table. Examples include: blind information, players on warning or penalties, disruptive behavior.

B: The dealer should inform the floor of all existing and potential infractions of Rules 2 (Player Responsibilities), 71 (Ethical Play), 72 (Conduct), and 73 (Game Pace, Etiquette, and Mechanics). Special emphasis on discriminatory or offensive behavior in general or towards specific players or staff.

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RP-16: Player Absent on a Breaking Table
If a player is not present during breaking of a table, their chips should be moved to the new table by a staff member.

RP-17: Tournament Draw Betting Procedures
Limping is allowed in all single-draw games.

RP-18: Order of Mixed Games
To reduce errors in mixed game events (ex HORSE), stud and stud-8 need not be played consecutively.

RP-19: Reducing Stalling
The house should clearly announce intention to reduce stalling so that players understand timely play is expected. It's recommended that each house establish creative methods for reducing stalling. Some methods successfully used by TDA member houses include:
Random table breaks instead of table draws, using fixed # of hands per level, going orbit for orbit, soft hand for hand, and adding a shot clock

RP-20: Cards Ready for Shuffle
At the start of the tournament of ending of a break, within one minute of starting or resuming play, the floor should announce "dealers prepare your decks". When at least 2 players are at the table, the dealer will wash and square the deck, to be ready for shuffle when the level starts. Play will begin once the clock starts with at least two players present. All players with chips at the table will be dealt cards and have blinds posted whether or not they are present at the table. Any players not present at the table when the last card is dealt will have their hands killed. If only one player is present at the table when the clock begins, the TD may award up to one set of blinds to that player, from the appropriate stacks, per two minutes elapsed from the clock

RP-21: Spreading the Pot
The pot will only be counted in pot-limit events. On request the pot may be spread to increase chip visibility. See also Rule 56: Pot Size and Pot-Limit Bets.

RP-22: Betting Non-Denominational Items (Bounty chips, clock tokens etc)
Action items with no nominal value (bounty chips, clock tokens etc) should be of different size than standard betting chips. Betting with these items will be interpreted per house policy or Rule 1 and may be ruled a call or all-in at TDs discretion.

RP-23: Chips of an Absent Player. When a player leaves the tournament with chips remaining on the table it is recommended:
A: Disqualified players. Chips should be removed from play (See also Rule 74-D). If in the money, house and gaming rules govern prize distribution.

B: Absent players not disqualified. 1) If player is in the money or has any chance of reaching the money, the chips should stay and play until busted. 2) If the house is certain the player won't return and there is no chance of reaching the money, the chips should be removed. 3) If the player ends in the money, house and gaming rules govern prize distribution.

RP-24: Players Requesting Information.
A player facing action who requests information may be provided the verbatim applicable rule and direct information about their options for betting action. Ex 1 "how much is the bet to me?" Answer "five thousand" not "only five thousand". Ex 2: "if I call can he raise" (when a 3rd player is all-in? Answer: "yes" or "no". Players must not be provided strategic guidance by the house.

RP-25: Tournament Draw Dealing Procedures. In draw events if there is question whether enough cards remain in the stub to deal the current round:
A: If the last remaining card in the stub would complete the deal by itself it should be used.

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B: If the stub is short but adding the burns would complete the deal, the remaining stub and burns should be mixed together to form a new stub. If all cards in the new stub are needed to complete the deal then deal without a burn; otherwise burn the top card and deal players their draw cards for that round.

C: If the procedure in B above is insufficient to complete the deal, OR if one of the burn cards was previously exposed, the remaining stub, burns, and muck should be shuffled together to form a new stub. The top card is burned then players are dealt their draw cards for that round.

D: The draw should be dealt in push and pull motion, (ex: push 2 cards to the player and pull 2 back).

RP-26: Chip Penalties (CP).

A: In a CP, a player forfeits chips rather than missing a given number of hands or timeperiod.

B: Potential advantages of a CP
-prevents laddering up on prize jumps when passively away on penalty. Especially impacts bubble play
-a time or hand penalty temporarily reduces the number of active players and the amount of chips that can be won while the player is out on penalty
-the player to the left of a player on penalty has a harder time defending his blinds, the player to the right gets the button twice for every orbit the penalized player is out
-a hand penalty has uneven impact on seat position; i.e. a player missing blinds vs missing hands not on the blinds
-player on a time penalty could lose no blinds or two sets of blinds if moved on a table break
-players on time/hand penalty away from the table slow the game if not returning promptly after penalty

C: Potential disadvantages of a CP
-may cause confusion or pushback from players not familiar with this form of penalty or who feel the penalty is too harshly calculated
-In a CP, chips are removed from play thus reducing the total number of chips in play in the tournament

D: CPs are just one of several penalty tools available for use in TD's sole discretion (See Rules 70-74)

RP-27: Dealmaking

For tournaments that permit deals, the TDA recommends the house provide reasonable help and supervision to the participants in order to reduce bullying and arrive at a deal acceptable to all participants. Common solutions are use of Yes/No or Red/Black cards that players can put out anonymously to indicate their agreement / disagreement with a proposed deal.

RP-28: Timekeeping

A: In tournaments using time banks, first action can be allocated less time (ex: 20 seconds for first action, 30 seconds for subsequent action).

RP-29: Showing Cards on Livestream.

For tournaments captured on livestream the house may require cards to be shown on the livestream at all times, including on the initial deal. Players are expected to comply and release forms should reflect this mandatory action.

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POKER TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS ASSN.
Illustration Addendum and Glossary, 2026 Rules
Version 1.0, September 7, 2026

The Poker TDA is a voluntary poker industry association founded in 2001. The TDA mission is to increase global uniformity of poker tournament rules. TDA Rules supplement the rules of this house. In case of conflict with a gaming agency, the agency rules apply.

Rule 11: Breaking Tables, 2-Step Random Process. A 2-step random or "double-blind" process assures that there is no favoritism in distributing new seat assignments. An example of one such process: 1) show players at the breaking table the new seat cards then scramble the cards face down and form a stack; 2) the dealer then deals one playing card face up to each player. The seat cards are then dealt out with the first seat card going to the player with the highest playing card by suit showing.

Rule 12-D: Balancing Tables and Halting Play.

Example: NLHE 9-handed, table A has 5 players, table B has the most players with 8. Play halts on table A once the BB hits an open seat.

Rule 17: Face Up for All-Ins. "All hands will be tabled without delay once a player is all-in and all betting action by all other players in the hand is complete". This rule means that all downcards of all players will be turned up at once when at least one player is all-in and there is no chance of further betting action by the other player(s). Do not wait for the showdown to turn the cards up; do not wait for side pots to be divided before turning up the all-in who is only in for the main pot; if betting action is finalized on any street prior to the showdown, turn the cards up at that point and then run out the remaining cards.

Example 1. NLHE. Two players remain. On the turn, Player A (the shorter stack) pushes all-in and is called by B. Turn both A and B's downcards up at this point, then burn and turn the river and proceed to showdown.

Example 2. NLHE. Three players remain.
Pre-flop, Player A (the shortest stack) pushes all-in and is called by both B and C. Do not turn cards up yet because B and C both have chips so further betting action is possible.

On the flop B and C check; betting is still possible so don't turn the cards up yet.

On the turn B pushes all-in and C calls. Turn all hands up now (A, B, and C) because no further betting is possible. Burn and turn the river then proceed to showdown. Award the side pot between B and C first, then award the main pot. Notice: you do not keep A's cards face down until the side pot between B and C is awarded.

Example 3. NLHE. Three players remain.

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Pre-flop, Player A (the shortest stack) pushes all-in for 700 and is called by both B and C who have several thousand each left. Do not turn cards up yet because B and C both have chips so further betting action is possible.

On the flop B and C check; betting is still possible so don't turn the cards up yet.
On the turn B bets 1000 and C calls. Since both B and C still have chips and the river remains to be dealt, betting is still possible so don't turn the cards up yet.

On the river both B and C check. Turn all hands up now (A, B, and C) because betting is over and the hand is moving to showdown. Award the 2000 side pot between B and C first, then award the main pot. Notice: do not keep A's cards face down until the side pot between B and C is awarded.

Rule 19: Asking to See a Hand

Example 1: NLHE. 3 players remain in the hand. There is no betting on the river and no player is all-in. At showdown Player A discards face down and the cards are pushed into the muck by the dealer. B tables his hand, showing trips. C pushes his cards forward face-down. B may ask to see C's hand because B has tabled his cards. However, B's request is at TDs discretion; B has no inalienable right to see it because there was no bet on the river thus he did not "pay to see C's hand." Neither A nor C may ask to see a competitor's hand because they have neither tabled their cards nor retained them.

Example 2: NLHE. 4 players remain in the hand. On the river A bets 1000, B calls, C raises to 5000, and D, A and B all call. No player is all-in. B tables his hand, showing trips. D instantly discards face down and the dealer kills his hand into the muck. C begins to push his cards forward face-down. Both A and B have an inalienable right to see C's hand on request because 1) they paid to see it as C was the last aggressor on the river and 2) both A and B retain their cards. D (who also called C) relinquished his right to see C's hand when he discarded without tabling. All other requests in this situation are at TD's discretion, such as B asking to see A's cards (the cards of another caller).

Rule 40: Burns After Substantial Action

Example 1-A: THE 50-100. SB / BB in seats 1 and 2. Pre-flop, initial cards dealt to all players. SB / BB in seats 1 and 2. Seat 3 (UTG) folds and Seat 4 calls, completing substantial action with 2 actions with chips. Seat 5 then realizes they have only 1 card and the hand is dead because SA has occurred. The dealer will burn only one card and then put out the flop. The dealer will not burn 2 cards to "return to the original stub order".

Example 1-B: Same game and initial deal. Seat 3 (UTG) folds and Seat 4 calls, completing substantial action. Seat 5 then realizes they have 3 cards and the hand is dead because SA has occurred. The dealer will burn one card and then put out the flop. The dealer will not consider Seat 5's third card as the burn and put out the flop without a burn off the stub.

Rule 42-A: Methods of Betting, Unclear or Contradictory Bets. "In unclear situations or where verbal and chips are contradictory, the TD will determine the bet based on the circumstances and Rule 1".

Example 1: THE, heads-up on the river Player A verbally declares "forty-two thousand" but pushes out only a 5k chip. Not everyone at the table heard the declaration. Player B pushes out 5k to call. Both players table and A has the best hand. Ruling criteria is mixed: verbal came first but wasn't

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necessarily clear. The chip appeared to be a bet of 5k. In these unclear and contradictory situations, the TD will make the fairest ruling possible using Rule 1.

Rule 45: Raise Amounts. "The largest prior full bet or raise of the current betting round".

This line refers to the largest additional action or "last legal increment" by a preceding bettor in the current round. The current round is the "current street", i.e. pre-flop, flop, turn, river in board games; 3rd – 4th – 5th – 6th – 7th street in 7-stud, etc.

Example 1: NLHE, Blinds 100-200. Post-flop, A opens with a bet of 600. B raises 1000 for total of 1600. C re-raises 2000 for total of 3600. If D wants to raise, he must at least raise the "largest bet or raise of the current round", which is C's raise of 2000. So, D must re-raise at least 2000 more for a total of 5600. Note that D's minimum raise is not 3600 (C's total bet), but only 2000, the additional raise action that C added.

Example 2: NLHE, Blinds 50-100. Pre-flop A is under the gun and goes all-in for a total of 150 (an increase in the bet of 50). So, we have a 100 blind bet and an all-in wager that increases the total by 50. Which is larger? The 100 is still the "largest bet or raise of the current round", so if B wants to re-raise he must raise at least 100 for a total of 250.

Example 3: NLHE, Blinds 100-200. On the turn A bets 300. B pushes out two 500 chips making the total 1000 (a 700 raise). It is 1000 to C to call. If C wants to raise, it must be "at least the largest bet or raise of the current round", which is B's raise of 700. So, C's minimum raise would be 700 for a total of 1700. Note his minimum raise is **not** 1000, B's total bet.

Example 4-A: NLHE, Blinds 25-50. A raises 75 to 125 total. Notice that 125 total = 50 (bet) plus 75 (raise). The next raise on this street must be "at least the size of the largest previous bet or raise", which is 75. B now raises the minimum (75) to 200 total. C then re-raises 300 for total of 500. We now have a bet of 50, two raises of 75 and a raise of 300 for total of 500. If D wants to re-raise, "the raise must be at least the size of the largest previous bet or raise of the current betting round", which is now 300. So, D must raise at least 300 more to a total of 800.

Example 4-B: Same as 4-A. It's the same 500 to D, but there's just been one raise of 450 by A to a total of 500 and B and C have both called. So, there's a blind bet of 50 and a raise of 450. "A raise must be at least the size of the largest previous bet or raise of the current betting round", which is A's raise of 450. So, it's 500 for D to call, and if D wants to re-raise he must raise at least 450 for a total of 950.

Rule 47: Multiple Chip Betting.
"A: If facing a bet, unless raise or all-in is declared first, a multiple-chip bet (including a bet of your last chips) is a call if every chip is needed to make the call; i.e. removal of just one of the smallest chips leaves less than the call amount. B: If every chip is not needed to make the call; i.e. removal of just one of the smallest chips leaves the call amount or more: 1) if the player has chips remaining, the bet is governed by the 50% standard in Rule 43; 2) if the player's last chips are bet he or she is all-in whether reaching the 50% threshold or not."

Example 1: There is not one chip that can be removed and still leave the call amount.
1-A: Player A opens post flop for 1200, B silently puts out two 1000's. This is a call because neither chip can be removed and still leave at least 1200.

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1-B: NLHE, blinds 250-500. Preflop the UTG raises 600 to total of 1100. The UTG+1 silently puts out one 500 and one 1000 chip. This is a call because neither the 500 nor the 1000 can be removed and still leave at least 1100.

Example 2: Same as 1-B above except the UTG+1 puts out one 1000 and five 100s silently. Four of the 100s could be removed and still leave the 1100 call amount. Therefore, this would be subject to the 50% standard in Rule 43: the minimum raise is 600, 50% of 600 is 300, therefore, if the UTG+1 puts out 1400 or more, he will be held to making a full raise to 1700 total. Since the UTG put out 1500 he must raise in this example.

Example 3: Same as 2 above except the UTG+1 puts out one 1000 and three 100s silently. Two of the 100s can be removed and still leave the 1100 call amount therefore this is subject to Rule 43. Since the player did not put out at least 50% of a minimum raise, this bet is ruled a call and 200 is returned to the player.

Example 4: Multiple-chip bet of all chips. A) If all chips are needed to make the call, this is treated exactly the same as a player with chips behind (See example 1 above). B) If removing just one of the smallest chips leaves the call amount or more, the player is all-in regardless of whether the bet reaches the 50% raise standard.

Example 4-A: A opens for 1400, B (with remaining chips behind in large chip stack) silently pushes out one 1000 and three 500's. This is a mandatory min-raise to 2800 because the 50% threshold of 2100 (1400+700=2100) is reached.

Example 4-B: Same 1400 opener, B (with remaining chips behind in large chip stack) puts out one 1000 and two 500s. This is a call because it is short of the 50% threshold of 2100. NOTE: In both example 4-A and 4-B, Player B would be all-in if putting out his or her last chips.

Rule 48: Prior Bet Chips Not Pulled In, situation examples.

Situation 1: If prior chips don't cover the call AND are left alone. Ex: THE 25-50, the BB posts two 25's, button raises to 600 total (550 more to BB).
1: Adding an overchip is a call (drop a 1k chip onto the two 25's).
2: Adding multiple new chips is a call if all new chips are needed to call a) drop two 500's onto the two 25's or b) drop a 100 and 500 chip onto the two 25's. In these two examples all new chips when combined with the prior chips are needed to make the call.
3: Adding multiple new chips is a Rule 45 multiple chip bet if one of the smallest new chips is not needed to make the call (drop a 1k and 500 chip onto the two 25's is a total bet of 1550). Per Rule 45, a silent multi-chip bet is a raise if it hits the 50% threshold; otherwise it is a call.

Situation 2: If prior chips don't cover the call AND are fully pulled back:
1) Removing all prior chips and adding an overchip is a call (pull back the two 25's, add 1k chip).
2) Removing all prior chips and adding new multiple chips is a Rule 45 bet (pull back two 25's, add two or more new chips).

Situation 3: if prior chip(s) are partly pulled back (whether or not they cover the call amount)
1) Partial removal of prior chips (pull back one 25, leave the other 25 out, add any new chip(s), is a Rule 45 multiple-chip bet (a raise if hitting 50%, otherwise a call).

Situation 4: If prior chip(s) cover the call amount, adding any new chip(s) is a Rule 45 multiple chip bet. Ex: THE 50-100, BB posts one 1k chip. Pre-flop raise to 700 (600 more to BB). The 1k prior chip

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covers the raise, thus adding any new chip(s) is a Rule 45 bet of all chips. This applies whether or not the initial 1k posted is pulled back or left alone.

Situation 5: Regardless of the above, the gesture of combining and pushing or tossing all chips forward may be interpreted as intent to bet all chips governed by Rule 47.

Rule 49: Re-opening the bet.

Example 1. Multiple short all-in wagers that cumulatively equal a full raise and therefore re-open betting:

NLHE, Blinds 50-100. Post-flop, A opens betting for the 100 minimum.

B goes all in for a total of 125. C calls the 125,

D goes all in for 200 total and E calls 200.

Action returns to A who is facing a total raise of 100. Since 100 is a full raise, the betting is re-opened for A who can fold, call, or raise here. Note that neither B's increment of 25 or D's increment of 75 is by itself a full raise, but when added together they total a full raise and thus re-open the betting to "a player who is facing at least a full raise when the action returns".

Example 1-A: At the end of Example 1 above, A smooth calls the 200 total (another 100 to him). The bet is now on C who only faces a 75 increment. C called 125 previously and now faces 200 total (75 more). C must face at least 225 total to re-open betting. Because 75 is not a full raise, betting for C is not re-opened and C can either call with 75 more or fold, he cannot raise.

Example 1-B: At the end of Example 1 above, A raises the minimum (100), and makes it 300 total to C. C already has called 125 so it's an additional 175 for C to call. 175 is more than a full raise. Since C already acted and is "now facing at least a full raise", the betting is re-opened to C who can fold, call, or re-raise here.

Example 2: Multiple short all-ins, the min-raise is the last full valid bet or raise.
NLHE, Blinds 50-100. Post-flop A opens for 300, B pushes all-in for 500 total, C goes all-in for 650 total, D goes all-in for 800 total, E calls 800. What is the min raise for Player F? The opening bet (300) sets the initial min raise. Because no single player was all-in for more than 300, the min raise for F remains 300. F can either smooth call 800 or raise to at least 1100. See also Rule 43, Example 2 in Illustration Addendum.

Example 3. Short all-in, 2 scenarios.
NLHE, Blinds 2000-4000. Pre-flop A calls the BB for 4000. B folds and C pushes all-in for 7500 total (an increment of 3500 above the 4000 BB). It's folded around to the SB who also folds.

Example 3-A. It's 3500 more to the BB who has not yet acted on his option. The BB can fold, smooth call the 3500, or raise by at least 4000 for a total of 11,500. The BB smooth calls and it's 3500 more to A. A has already acted and is facing 3500 which is not a full raise. Therefore, A can only fold or call the 3500, he cannot raise because it is not "at least a full bet when the action returns to him".
Example 3-B. The BB raises the minimum (4000), for a total of 11500. It is now 7500 to A and because 7500 is more than a full minimum raise, betting is now re-opened for A who can fold, call, or re-raise.

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Rule 53: Binding Declarations / Undercalls in Turn

Example 1: NLHE, blinds 1000-2000. Post-flop, A opens for 2000, B raises to 8000, C pushes out 2000 silently. C has undercalled B's bet. Per Rule 51-B, because B is not the opener (A is) and the round is still multi-way, at TD's discretion C may be required to make a full call or allowed to forfeit the 2000 undercall and fold.

Example 2: NLHE, blinds 1000-2000. Post-flop 4 players remain. A opens for 8000, B silently puts out 2000. Per Rule 51-B, B undercalled the opening bet and must make a full call of 8000.

Example 3: NLHE, blinds 1000-2000. Post-flop, A opens for 2000, B raises to 8000, C declares "call". Per Rule 51-A, C has made a general verbal declaration ("call") in turn. C is obligated to call B's full bet of 8000.

Example 4: NLHE, blinds 200-400. Opener bets 400, player A raises to 1200 and Player B puts out one 500 chip silently. Dealer tells B it's 1200 and B folds. At TD's discretion B forfeits 400 and 100 is returned.

Rule 54-B: Incorrect Bet Amounts, Pot-Limit Games

Example 1: PLO, 500-1000 blinds. Post-flop the pot totals 10,500. Player A wants to bet the pot and asks the dealer for a count. Dealer replies "nine thousand five hundred". A pushes out 9,500. Player B folds and Player C calls 9,500. Substantial action has occurred after the initial erroneous bet. The dealer then realizes A's pot bet should have been 10,500. Because the quoted amount was less than the pot and substantial action has occurred, the 9,500 bet is binding and will not be increased to 10,500.

Example 2: Same as example 1 above, Player B folds then the dealer realizes A's pot bet should have been 10,500. Substantial action has not occurred, so A must increase his or her bet to 10,500 total.

Example 3: PLO, 500-1000 blinds. Post-flop the pot totals 10,500. Player A wants to bet the pot and asks the dealer for a count. Dealer replies "eleven thousand five hundred". A pushes out 11,500. Player B folds, Player C and D both call 11,500. Before burning and turning the next card, the dealer realizes the initial bet was an illegal overbet. Despite substantial action occurring, because the bet was illegal it will be reduced to 10,500 for all players calling anywhere on the current street. If the next card is dealt the error will stand.

Rule 55-A-1: Action Out of Turn (OOT) Multi-way

Example 1: THE 50-100. Post flop Seat 3 opens for 300, Seat 4 folds, action is on Seat 5 when Seat 6 declares "raise to eight hundred".
Step 1: Action backs up to the correct player in order (Seat 5) who is facing a bet of 300.
Step 2: If Seat 5 calls or folds then the action (a 300 bet) has not changed and Seat 6's OOT raise is binding (raise to 800). However, if Seat 5 raises, (say, to 600 total), then the action to Seat 6 has changed from a 300 bet to a 600 bet. If action changes, the 800 chips may be returned to Seat 6 who has all options open: call 600, re-raise to at least 900, or fold.

Example 2: THE 50-100. Post flop Seat 3 checks, Seat 4 checks, action is on Seat 5 when Seat 6 declares "check".
Step 1: Action backs up to the correct player in order (Seat 5) who is not facing a bet.

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Step 2: If Seat 5 checks then the action (a check) has not changed and Seat 6's OOT check is binding. But if Seat 5 bets (say, 300) then the action to Seat 6 has changed from check to a 300 bet. If action changes, Seat 6 has all options open: call 300, raise to at least 600, or fold.

Rule 55-A-2: Substantial Action Out of Turn (OOT) Multi-way. A player skipped by OOT action must defend his right to act. If there is reasonable time and the skipped player has not spoken up by the time substantial action (see Rule 38) OOT occurs to his left, the OOT action is binding. The floor will be called to render a decision on how to treat the skipped hand.

Example 1: NLHE, blinds 100-200. UTG (Seat 3) makes it 600. Seat 4 is skipped when Seat 5 calls 600 OOT. Seat 6 thinks for a moment then folds. There are now two players acting with chips involved to the left of Seat 4. Two players with chips qualifies as substantial action (Rule 38). Also, Seat 4 has had reasonable time to speak up and bring it to the dealer's attention that he has been skipped. The OOT call by Seat 5 is now binding due to substantial action OOT, and the OOT fold by Seat 6 is binding (Rule 60). The floor is called to make a decision on the fate of Seat 4's hand.

Example 2: NLHE, blinds 100-200. Four players remain to see the turn. After the dealer tables the turn card, the UTG (Seat 3) opens betting for 600. Seat 4 is skipped when Seat 5 checks and Seat 6 calls 600 OOT. The floor is called to make a decision on the fate of Seat 4's hand.

Rule 55-B: Action Out of Turn (OOT) Heads-Up

Example 1 (passive action): NLHE,blinds 100-200. Two players remain to see the turn. Correct action is on Seat 1 but Seat 2 checks (acts passively) out of turn. Action returns to Seat 1 who bets 1000. Seat 2 may call the 1000 or fold, he may not raise.

GLOSSARY

Game Types

Dealer's choice: in mixed-games, the player designated "dealer" chooses the variant to be played next round
FL: Fixed Limit
HEROS Limit Hold'em, Stud/8, Razz, Omaha/8 Stud
Mixed games: combination of different poker variations played in rotation or dealer's choice
NL: No limit
NLH; No Limit Hold'em
O8: Omaha 8 or better
PL: Pot limit
PLO: Pot limit Omaha
PLO/8: Pot limit Omaha 8 or better
2-7 SD: 2-7 Single Draw
2-7 TD: 2-7 Triple Draw

Table Positions

BB: big blind
BTN: the seat acting last on post-flop betting rounds
CO: cutoff, the seat to the right of the button

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HJ: hijack, the seat to the right of the CO
MP: middle position, seats “in the middle”, neither acting first or last on a betting round.
SB: small blind
UTG: player acting first pre-flop

Action Terms and Play Styles
BBA: Big Blind Ante
Bring-in: A forced wager to start betting action. Ex: in stud, the lowest upcard by rank and suit is the bring-in.
The Bubble: one elimination away from the start of prize pool payouts
C-Bet: “Continuation Bet” made on the flop by the preflop raiser
H4H: Hand for hand
KO: Knock out
OOT: Out Of Turn
PKO: Progressive Knock Out
SA: Substantial Action, also frequently called “significant action”
VPIP: Voluntarily Put Money In Pot
XR: Check-raise. Initially checking, then raising when your opponent(s) bet

Environment and Tournament Types
Add-on: An add-on is done at the close of registration when a player can buy more chips for a predetermined amount no matter what your stack size is.
EV: Expected Value
Freezeout: A tournament with one chance to buy in and no reentry or rebuys
FT: Final Table
GTO: Game Theory Optional
ICM: Independent Chip Model
ITM: In The Money, player has reached the level of prize pool payouts
M: M-Ratio
MLR: Maximum Late Registration
MTT: Multi Table Tournament
NIT: Extremely tight player
Rebuy: A rebuy is generally done at the table where a player can purchase more chips once they are at or below the starting stack, A double rebuy is allowed if a player has lost all of their chips during the rebuy period.
REC: Recreational Player
Reentry or RE: Reentry is a second buy-in to the same event you just busted where you have to go and register again
REG: Regular player
RFID: Radio Frequency Identification, which is implanted in cards for reading for live streams
ROI: Return on investment. Metric used to track and compare poker profitability
TD: Tournament Director
TDA: Tournament Directors Association

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